

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELFAS 00325 141605Z

47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /069 W

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R 141343Z OCT 75

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1058

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 325

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: CRAIG WINS CONFIDENCE VOTE BUT VANGUARD PARTY SPLITS

REF: BELFAST 322

1. VANGUARD UNIONIST PARTY LEADER WILLIAM CRAIG WON VOTE OF THE VANGUARD CENTRAL COUNCIL OCT. 11 ON A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN HIS LEADERSHIP AND POLICIES. VOTE WAS 128 VOTES TO 79. NINE VANGUARD CONVENTION MEMBERS LED BY DEPUTY LEADER ERNEST BAIRD IMMEDIATELY ANNOUNCED INTENTIONS OF RESIGNING FROM VANGUARD AND WALKED OUT OF MEETING. NINE LATER LATER JOINED IN RESIGNATION BY MID-ULSTER VANGUARD M.P. JOHN DUNLOP. THERE NOW TOTAL FOUR VANGUARD PARTY MEMBERS LEFT IN CONVENTION - CRAIG, GLENN BAR AND DAVID TRIMBLE AND GEORGE GREEN. NINE FORMER VANGUARD MEMBERS UNDER BAIRD LEADERSHIP EXPECTED FORM CONVENTION BLOC SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC AND OFFICIAL UNIONISTS IN ADHERENCE TO PLAN SUBMIT MAJORITY REPORT FROM CONVENTION TO WESTMINISTER RECOMMENDING, IN PART, DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT WITH MINORITY PARTIES PARTICIPATING IN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES BUT EXCLUDED FROM CABINET POSITIONS.

2. UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION (UUUC) MEETS TODAY TO DECIDE FUTURE OF VANGUARD AS ONE OF LEG OF TRIPARTITE COALITION. THERE WILL BE STRONG PRESSURE FROM BAIRD, IAN PAISLEY AND OTHERS TO UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BELFAS 00325 141605Z

EXPEL VANGUARD AND TO ACCEPT THE NINE AS REPLACEMENTS. THIS

WOULD HAVE EFFECT OF MAKING VANGUARD VERY SMALL PARTY IN CONVENTION. HOWEVER CRAIG GROUP CONTROLS MOST OF PARTY MACHINERY AND INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF PARAMILITARY GROUPS (BARR AND GREEN) AND HAS SOME CONNECTIONS WITH ULSTER "INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY," THROUGH CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERT AND UNIVERSITY LECTURER TRIMBLE. VANGUARD REMAINS SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL FORCE IN ULSTER. ERNEST BAIRD CHARGED THAT IT FORCE WITH NEW ORIENTATION. BAIRD BITTERLY COMPLAINED THAT VANGUARD MEMBERS WHO SUPPORTED CRAIG OCT. 11 DID NOT KNOW WHAT THEY WERE REALLY VOTING FOR, WHICH WAS TO TURN PARTY OTHER TO "LEFTISTS" (BARR).

3. EVEN WERE VANGUARD TO CHALLENGE UUUC ON CONVENTION FLOOR IT UNLIKELY ANY SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATION TO MAJORITY REPORT FROM CONVENTION NOW ACHIEVABLE. BY GARNERING ALL POSSIBLE VOTES SYMPATHETIC TO "SHARED GOVERNMENT", MAJORITY WOULD STILL BE WITH UUUC AND INDEPENDENT LOYALIST HARLINDERS 40-38. CRAIG WILL PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT SEEK THIS LOSING CONFRONTATION. IT IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER TWO POINTS: (A) CRAIG NOT RPT NOT ADVOCATING INSTITUTIONALIZED "POWER SHARING" WITH LARGELY ROMAN CATHOLIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP. HE FAVORS CONTINUED EXPLORATION WITH SDLP OR POSSIBILITY REACHING "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" TO FORM TEMPORARY VOLUNTARY COALITION GOVERNMENT IN PERIOD EMERGENCY AND ON BASIS PRE-AGREEMENT ON POLICIES AND (B) SDLP HAS EXPRESSED NO RPT NO INDICATION AS TO WHETHER SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO THAT PARTY. IT APPEARS CRAIG STRATEGY WILL BE AWAIT "PHASE TWO" OF CONVENTION WHICH WILL OCCUR AFTER PREDICTED WESTMINSTER PARLIAMENT REJECTION OF MAJORITY REPORT THAT UUUC HOPES TO SUBMIT AROUND NOVEMBER 8. CRAIG VIEWS COULD BE GIVEN AIRING EITHER WHEN CONVENTION "RECONSIDERS" REPORT, AT ELECTION FOR NEW CONVENTION OR IN NORTHERN IRELAND REFERENDA ON VARIOUS PROPOSALS. IN INTERIM CRAIG HOPES TO MOBILIZE POPULAR SUPPORT AND GAIN RECRUITS CHIEFLY FROM MODERATES IN OFFICIAL UNIONIST PARTY.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY LEADERS, PARTY MEETINGS, PARTY SCHISMS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 OCT 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975BELFAS00325  
**Document Source:** CORE  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750356-0123  
**From:** BELFAST  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Line Count:** 96  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 BELFAST 322  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** buchant0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 NOV 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 NOV 2003 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <20 JAN 2004 by buchant0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CRAIG WINS CONFIDENCE VOTE BUT VANGUARD PARTY SPLITS  
**TAGS:** PINT, UK, VANGUARD UNIONIST PARTY, (CRAIG, WILLIAM)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006